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FRENCH COMMUNISTS FIND COOPERATION PAYS Page 16

In the past six months the French Communist Party has largely emerged from its parliamentary isolation and won wider public sympathy. Nevertheless, the party seems to have difficulty in mobilizing its resources to exploit the current divisions of French opinion on EDC, Indochina, and East-West relations.

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The doctrine of T. D. Lysenko, dean of Soviet agricultural science, has been brought under fire in the USSR in recent weeks. The character of recent Soviet agricultural decisions suggests, however, that his views as an applied scientist are still valued by the policy-makers.

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THE SOVIET WORLD

Moscow's and Peiping's statements on the possibility that hostilities in Indochina may be expanded have been couched in such terms as to preserve the Communists' freedom of action at the Geneva conference. They appear to believe that there will be no major change in the Indochina situation before the end of the current fighting season in late May or June. Their Indochina policy is expected to depend primarily on the course of negotiations at Geneva.

The Sino-Soviet line for some time has been that the United States wishes to prevent the French from reaching an Indochina settlement and intends to sabotage the Geneva conference if it can. This line recently has been extended to assert that the United States, by falsely charging that the Chinese have intervened in Indochina, is paving the way for increased American intervention and to that end is trying to coerce its allies into "united action." The ultimate victim of such action is said to be Communist China.

The Communist interest in the Geneva conference, the denials of Chinese intervention and the military picture in southern China (see article, page 6), all suggest that Moscow and Peiping are not contemplating the commitment of Chinese combat forces in Indochina at this time. Similarly, the Communists may estimate on the basis of statements by Western leaders that Communist China and the Viet Minh are not faced with an immediate threat of internationalization of the war.

Communist propaganda suggests genuine uncertainty and concern, however, as to the forms of action the West might take if no cease-fire agreement is reached at Geneva. It has noted such possibilities as increased American material aid to the French, employment of American and other foreign troops in Indochina, and blockade and bombing of the China mainland, including the use of atomic weapons.

Peiping's official People's Daily has stated that the answer to the question of what "united action" would lead to "has already been given in the Korean war." Similarly, Pravda has said that "repetition of the Korean variant" would end in "defeat for the aggressors." On 15 April a member of the Soviet UN delegation in New York told an American official that the Chinese "could not be blind" to the French and "now American" threat to their southern borders.

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Such pronouncements are much less threatening than Chinese Communist statements prior to the intervention in Korea. At that time, the reiterated assertion that the Chinese "could not stand idly by" was backed up by an explicit warning from Premier Chou En-lai that the Chinese would intervene if American forces crossed the 38th parallel.

Moscow and Peiping are expected to be evasive on the subject of Chinese intervention until they have an opportunity to test Western unity and gauge Western intentions at Geneva.

In Eastern Europe the secret trial of 11 former Rumanian Communist leaders, which resulted in the execution of former minister of justice Patrascanu, and heavy jail sentences for the others, is the third in a series of secret trials of purged high-ranking Communist officials long under arrest. Patrascanu was one of the top Communist leaders of Rumania prior to his purge in February 1948. Several accomplices of the executed Czech leader Rudolf Slansky were quietly tried last February, and former Hungarian secret police chief Gabor Peter was sentenced with several associates to life imprisonment in March. The timing of these trials and the fact that they were unpublicized suggest that they were held primarily to clear up the backlog of cases against purged officials before the imminent party congresses.

The Rumanian trial is unique in the severity of the sentences and in the specific charges of espionage "in the service of the United States." Neither Ana Pauker nor Vasile Luca, former Rumanian politburo members who were purged in 1952 but never tried, was mentioned in the public announcement of the trial.

Inside the USSR, the latest government move to step up the supply of skilled manpower for the economic program has been the creation of a Chief Administration of Labor Reserves which will report directly to the Council of Ministers. This measure, which was announced on 6 April, apparently reflects the priority now assigned to technical education. Trainees were drafted for the Labor Reserve Schools when they were first established in 1940, and it is likely that compulsory recruitment will still be necessary to meet the new Soviet goals for training of workers.

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CHINESE COMMUNIST MILITARY STRENGTH IN THE INDOCHINA BORDER AREA

At least 216,000 and possibly as many as 368,000 Chinese Communist troops are located within about 500 miles of Indochina. Few tactical aircraft are currently based within range of the border, however, and extensive construction or renovation of air facilities there is not known to be under way.

The confirmed strength of 216,000 troops in Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kweichow and Yunnan provinces includes six armies, one independent infantry division and two artillery divisions. Information on other units in the area is limited, but an additional 152,000 troops may be there. The state of training and equipment of these units is uncertain.

There is general agreement that at least three of these armies, totaling about 120,000 troops, could be massed and moved to the Indochina frontier in less than two weeks. The French have previously indicated that the entrance of a force of this size into Tonkin would more than tip the scales against them. Peiping could not send the remainder of its armies in southern China into Indochina, however, without leaving critical areas unprotected. Moreover, only one of these armies saw combat action in Korea, and two of them seem to be engaged in construction work.

Any commitment of Chinese ground forces in Indochina beyond the three armies would thus be likely to require the shifting of combat-trained troops from the north. As many as three of the armies now in Manchuria which saw action in the Korean war might be brought to the Indochina border within two or three weeks.

Improved communications and supply routes include four usable roads, and another two or three of possible use, approaching the border from east and west. The status of roads in Viet Minh areas of Tonkin and the extent of their limitations on an invading force are not clear. Assuming that Tonkin roads were not interdicted by air and without considering seasonal factors, it is considered that a maximum of 288,000 Chinese Communist troops could be supported for Indochina operations, according to US army studies.

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FRENCH AND BRITISH APPROACHES TO THE GENEVA CONFERENCE

French and British approaches to the Geneva conference continue to be determined by major domestic political considerations as tripartite conversations in Paris seek to coordinate Western conference tactics. France sees the conference almost entirely in terms of its desire for a way out of the Indochina war. Britain, though substantially sharing the American view that there is little hope a general relaxation of tensions from Geneva, is reluctant to undertake further military commitments either in Southeast Asia or Korea.

Strong parliamentary and public opinion obliges the French government to make good its announced intention to seek a negotiated settlement of the Indochina war at Geneva. This pressure has forced the Korean question into the background in French thinking, and Premier Laniel in his report to the National Assembly on 9 April made it clear that France will maintain complete freedom of action at Geneva. Despite some official expressions of pessimism on the outcome of the conference, the government apparently still hopes that something will happen to bring about a solution.

The Laniel government has given no clear indication of how it hopes to negotiate an end to the war. In preliminary talks with American representatives, some officials indicated interest in a simple cease-fire as the first move but ignored the problem of how this could be accomplished without extending de facto recognition to the Ho regime. Citing the example of Korea, they pointed out that it is possible to end the fighting without a political settlement, and army experts are now working on the problem of military safeguards during a truce period.

Foreign Ministry representatives base their hope of achieving a cease-fire on the belief that the Soviet Union wishes to prevent expansion of the war, that Communist China fears American intervention, and that both Vietnam and the Viet Minh are reluctant to face increased Chinese influence in Vietnam. Even before the Moscow radio's reiteration on 18 April of Ho's November "peace feeler," Foreign Minister Bidault seemed to put considerable faith in Soviet offers to help to end the war. Since Secretary Dulles' recent visit to Paris, his "united action" proposal is officially interpreted as having solidified the West's position, and has increased the hope that Geneva will produce a settlement.

France has not yet decided to invite the Associated States to Geneva, largely because it believes that such a step would probably result in a Soviet invitation to the Viet Minh. Some officials have suggested that the Associated States be invited as "consultative observers."

The fall of Dien Bien Phu would reduce the prestige of French Union forces to a new low and would generate increased political pressure in France for an immediate settlement regardless of consequences. If Dien Bien Phu's fall were accompanied by conciliatory gestures from the Communist bloc, the government would be pushed even further toward such a settlement.

The British government's approach to the conference is evidently influenced to an important degree by continued domestic criticism of its alleged subservience to "reckless" American leadership, and by reluctance to accept new military commitments resulting from either Southeast Asian developments or renewed hostilities in Korea.

In general, however, London has adopted no position markedly at variance with Washington's on either Korea or Indochina. There is no indication that the British have any preferred plan for the solution of the Indochina problem. Generally, Britain seems to regard Indochina mainly as a problem for France and the United States.

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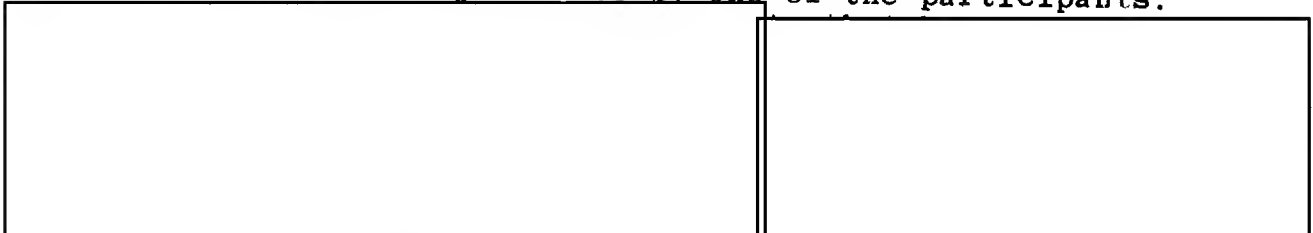
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THE COLOMBO CONFERENCE OF SOUTH ASIAN PRIME MINISTERS

The conference of five South Asian prime ministers, scheduled to open in Colombo, Ceylon, on 28 April, may turn into a forum for the views of Prime Minister Nehru, who is expected to make a vigorous attack on American policies in southern Asia. The others, however, are not likely to follow his lead on a specific program of action.

The conference--including Ceylon, India, Pakistan, Burma and Indonesia--was suggested in December 1953 by Prime Minister Kotelawala of Ceylon to discuss mutual problems. No formal agenda has been prepared, and the participants have been free to offer topics for discussion as these came to mind, although no subject will be discussed if objected to by one of the participants.

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The injection of Indochina into the Colombo talks would be a change in emphasis regarding subjects it was earlier thought the conference might cover. A Ceylonese press announcement on 9 March, for example, emphasized economic cooperation, industrial development and questions of food supply, giving less attention to political and defense problems. The shift to a discussion of a specific current political issue is probably the result of pressure from India.

Nehru initially showed great enthusiasm for the conference, in the evident hope that it might result in a statement attacking Pakistan's "alliance" with the United States. His enthusiasm was reported to have cooled after both Kotelawala and Prime Minister Mohammed Ali of Pakistan stated that this subject was out of bounds.

More recently, however, Nehru and the Indian press have seen new conference topics in American nuclear weapons tests and in Secretary Dulles' call for "united action" in Indochina. It is apparent that India intends to strike at American "intervention" in Asia with whatever stick is handiest at the time the conference meets. Ambassador Allen in New Delhi believes Nehru may call for a united front of "independent" Asian nations as an alternative to the "Western-dominated front" proposed by the United States.

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Pakistan was cautious in its acceptance of the invitation to Colombo, probably because it fears that Nehru might have Burmese and Indonesian support in his attempts to dominate the proceedings. Karachi's comments have been mostly limited to generalities, although Mohammed Ali has said he would be willing to discuss the Kashmir dispute if Nehru were agreeable. Pakistan's alignment with the West sets it apart from the other conferees, and it is likely to be psychologically isolated if regional defense problems are debated.

The conference has aroused very little public interest in Burma and Indonesia. Press coverage has been meager and official statements have been confined to expressions of hope that there may be progress toward solution of "mutual problems." Premiers U Nu and Ali Sastroamidjojo are expected to play generally passive roles. Although both may sympathize with the Indian point of view, they will not necessarily follow Nehru's leadership slavishly.

Indonesia appears to regard the Colombo meeting primarily as a steppingstone toward a more inclusive conference of Asian and African states. President Sukarno is reported to be personally interested in this project, and it is quite possible that Sastroamidjojo will propose at Colombo that such a conference be convened in Indonesia in the near future.

These divergent views on the subject matter and objectives of the Colombo conference will probably preclude agreements for common action by the five states. The conference may nevertheless increase South Asia's sense of regional community. Should Nehru gain the upper hand, it might also enable him to claim wider support for his concept of a "third area" between the Orbit and the West.

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PROSPECTS OF THE PEOPLE'S UNITED PARTY IN THE 28 APRIL ELECTIONS IN BRITISH HONDURAS

In the elections for the 15-man Legislative Council scheduled for 28 April in British Honduras, the first under universal suffrage, the anticolonial People's United Party (PUP) appears likely to win a majority of the nine seats at stake. Constitutional safeguards and the absence of Communist activity make improbable the kind of crisis which followed the first elections in British Guiana under universal suffrage last year.

The British claim evidence of PUP ties in the past with Guatemala. Testimony during an official British inquiry last month indicated that PUP leaders received a \$350 donation from that country in 1951, and requested financial aid from Guatemala early in 1953. The party's efforts to obtain moral and material assistance from Guatemala seem, however, to have been designed solely to further the securing of independence for the colony.

The PUP leaders have repeatedly attacked Communism and rejected Guatemala's insistent claims to sovereignty over British Honduras. There is strong resentment against Guatemala in the colony and Communism appears to have made no inroads whatever. Guatemala's apparent refusal of the latest request for funds suggests that it now recognizes that PUP objectives cannot be reconciled with its aim of annexation.

To assure itself of representation on the governor's Executive Council, the PUP must win eight of the nine elective seats on the Legislative Council, a difficult task in view of the strength of some independents and candidates of the pro-British National Party, the only other party in British Honduras. Of the remaining six seats, three are ex-officio, and three are filled by the governor. The constitution provides much less local autonomy than did that of British Guiana, and even with a majority in the Legislative Council the PUP could not obstruct the government seriously. Recent conciliatory speeches by PUP candidates, meanwhile, lend support to British predictions that public responsibility will exert a moderating influence on the party's leaders.

The American consul in Belize believes PUP leaders would lose much of their following if charges of their close association with Guatemala were proved. The relatively innocuous findings disclosed by the official inquiry may boomerang against the British and increase popular sympathy for the party. Nevertheless, the British are not expected to postpone the elections.

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PROGRESS IN NORTH KOREAN REHABILITATION

North Korea, with Soviet bloc technical and material aid, is beginning to show progress in its rehabilitation efforts. The regime is plagued by labor and material shortages, however, and most major industrial facilities are still inoperable.

Substantial implementation of the Soviet and Chinese aid pacts began shortly after they were signed in September and November 1953 respectively. Pyongyang broadcasts first referred in early December to the bulk arrival of foreign materials. Since then public references to significant quantities of aid goods have occurred almost daily.

The type of aid which has arrived has been consistent with that promised in the publicized agreements. Soviet help has been primarily to heavy industry, while China's has consisted mainly of railroad equipment, raw materials, and consumer goods.

Typical shipments from the Soviet Union include machinery, metals, electrical, transportation and agricultural equipment, and chemical fertilizers. By January Soviet aid had amounted to a total of 1,200 carloads.

Chinese aid consists primarily of textiles, grains, shoes, coal, cement, and substantial quantities of railroad equipment. According to North Korean announcements, "several hundred" carloads began arriving daily in January. While these claims may be exaggerated, neutral nations personnel at Manpojin reported shortly after the armistice that 20 trains a day were crossing the border into North Korea. The European Satellites have sent limited quantities, including horses, farm implements, and various types of machinery, textiles, shoes, and medicine.

In addition to material aid, technicians have been dispatched to Korea to assist in the rehabilitation and to train Korean workers. The Soviet Union, China, and Czechoslovakia have sent the greatest numbers of technicians, but some have also arrived from Hungary, Poland and possibly East Germany. Soviet technicians have been mentioned at metallurgical works, hydroelectric installations, mines, and other industrial plants. Czech technicians have been noted at a cement works, an auto factory and a metallurgical plant. The only sizable groups of foreign workers, however, are the largely unskilled Chinese Peoples' Volunteer Labor Battalions, which are rehabilitating railroads, bridges, roads, and buildings. Groups as large as 8,800 have been mentioned.

The import of large quantities of both industrial equipment and consumer goods indicates how seriously the economy was damaged during the war, and the present high degree of dependence of foreign aid.

The minister of heavy industry announced that the three-year plan ending in 1956 "will enable us to restore our national economy to its prewar level within a short period and to develop it...." At the present time, however, rehabilitation has not progressed to a stage of self-sufficiency, even at a subsistence level. By the end of 1954 the metallurgical industry expects to reach only 35 percent of its prewar production. Intensified efforts in coal mining are being urged, and coal mining machinery has been imported from the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, Pyongyang radio reported the importation of 250,000 tons of coal between November and 22 March. Farmers are frequently exhorted to increase the collection of manure, although the Soviet Union has announced sending 40,000 tons of chemical fertilizers. Even basic necessities for the depleted population must be imported, as evidenced by announced imports of 17,500,000 meters of fabrics, and 55,000 tons of food grains from China.

Frequent difficulties hinder the regime in implementing its ambitious industrialization plans. As late as 2 April Pyongyang admitted that there was a large "discrepancy between the vast rehabilitation and construction projects and our technical abilities."

On 6 March, the regime announced that rehabilitation of the Hungnam fertilizer factory would take a "long time." This plant has been mentioned in Soviet aid announcements, and was the largest fertilizer plant in Korea before the war.

Progress is being made despite these difficulties, however. Almost all the railroad truck lines are open to traffic, and many war-damaged facilities are again producing, including North Korea's largest hydroelectric installation at Suiho. Rehabilitation of most major industrial installations, however, is still in the initial stages, and the planning for construction is not yet sufficiently developed to allow the most efficient use of the resources available.

FRENCH COMMUNISTS FIND COOPERATION PAYS

In the past six months the French Communist Party has succeeded, by tactics of unsolicited cooperation, in emerging to a considerable extent from its parliamentary isolation and has won new public sympathy. Nevertheless, the party seems to have difficulty in mobilizing its resources to exploit the current divisions of French opinion on EDC, Indochina, and East-West relations.

The adoption of a policy of cooperation was revealed last October when Jacques Duclos, France's number two Communist, announced at a central committee meeting that the party was ready to unite with "all Frenchmen, whoever they might be," to defeat European integration and to end the Indochina war. He reaffirmed previous statements that the party was ready to support foreign and domestic reform policies such as those advocated by Radical-Socialist Pierre Mendes-France and Gaston Maurice. At the same time, however, the Communist party central committee reasserted its intention to undermine the leadership of the Socialist Party, which had officially rebuffed earlier overtures, by winning over the Socialist rank and file by means of a campaign for "unity of action from below."

In the December presidential election, the party made a definite effort to end its seven-year isolation in parliament when it supported the anti-EDC Socialist candidate. In January, Communist support assured the election of a Socialist as assembly president. Communist votes also elected anti-EDC candidates to chairmanships of several key committees. Communist deputies showed unusual cordiality towards their fellow deputies and made no effort to hamstring the budget debates.

The new Communist strategy is favored by the apparent international detente, most recently evidenced in the Soviet security proposals, and by the deepening cleavages of French opinion over EDC and Indochina. Renewed interest is apparent among other political groups in the advantages of further Communist support, perhaps for a vaguely defined left-center bloc. Even such Socialist leaders as Jules Moch and Daniel Mayer, both staunchly anti-Communist but also anti-EDC, have shown a tendency to welcome Communist backing. The Radical-Socialist elder statesmen, Edouard Herriot and Edouard Daladier, have exhibited similar interest, as have many Gaullists.

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Present assembly alignments make another Popular Front government seem quite remote, but the possibility cannot be dismissed entirely, because the Communists are at least holding their own in public appeal. In a much-publicized by-election in the Paris suburbs in March, the Communist candidate lost only because the major center and right parties rallied to a single candidate who campaigned on a platform of anti-Communist unity. Even then the Communist won more votes than his party had ever before received in that area. This reflected mainly the consolidation of Communist forces apparent in the municipal elections in the spring of 1953, when the Communists improved their positions in areas where they were already strong.

Internally, however, the party continues to suffer from difficulties which have plagued it since Secretary General Maurice Thorez was paralyzed in 1950. A struggle for power is evident in the dismissal on 6 March of Auguste Lecoœur, hitherto regarded as the number three French Communist, from his post as party organization secretary.

The charges against Lecoœur suggest that the recent emphasis on cooperation with other parties may have met considerable resistance from militants who have always favored the "hard" line. This is seen particularly in the charge that Lecoœur's policies were "sectarian" and gave a false impression that the party was politically isolated.

Duclos' announcements at the central committee meeting in March of over 6,000 new members and 125 new cells were apparently designed to give the impression that the obvious decline in party membership since 1947 has been arrested. He refused at that time to comment on the question of the annual reissue of membership cards, which would reveal approximate current strength. This suggests that the party is at best barely holding its membership level, estimated at not more than 450,000.

A new indication of the party's actual strength may be provided at its congress scheduled for June. This will be the first congress in four years, although party regulations require one biennially. The decision to convene it now suggests that a facade of unified support for the tactics and personnel changes of the past six months is necessary if the party is to exploit its current opportunities more fully.

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SPECIAL ARTICLE

THE LATEST LYSENKO AFFAIR

The doctrine of T. D. Lysenko, dean of Soviet agricultural science and the official victor in the 1948 genetics controversy, has been brought under fire in the USSR in recent weeks. The Soviet leaders are calling for criticism of Lysenko, the popularizer of the view that acquired characteristics of plant and animal species can be transmitted through inheritance. They now appear aware that research work cast within this dogmatic context has failed to fulfill Lysenko's promises to raise agricultural productivity. The new regime is attempting to liberate Soviet agricultural scientists for more objective and possibly more fruitful inquiry. Nevertheless, the character of recent Soviet agricultural decisions suggests that Lysenko's views as a practical agronomist are still valued by the policy-makers.

The reputation of Lysenko, whose practical achievements were transformed into infallible Marxist theory under Stalin, is now being reduced to more realistic proportions. Not only have editorials called for a critical discussion of Lysenko's theories within the scientific community, but First Secretary Khrushchev personally rebuked Lysenko in late February for defending the agricultural official of the State Planning Committee who was blamed for the unplanned reduction of grain acreages in the USSR in recent years.

Although Lysenko's doctrine had been virtually unchallenged since the 1948 controversy in which he had Stalin's personal support, a few rumblings of protest from within the scientific community appeared in late 1952. The editor of the Botanical Journal attempted at that time to touch off debate on the validity of his theories, but the ensuing discussion was neither sustained nor penetrating. By contrast, the latest statements from fellow scientists have been unrestrained in their criticism. One described his defense of a controversial doctoral dissertation as "a mockery of Soviet science."

These attacks on Lysenko as a theoretician, however, have not been accompanied by a corresponding diminution of his authority as an applied scientist. On the contrary, the government has called on the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences, which he heads, to join the agricultural ministries in drafting

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plans for the latest scheme for expansion of grain acreages. Even after criticism by First Secretary Khrushchev, Lysenko was re-elected to the Supreme Soviet, being carried on the official lists as second among the intellectuals only to the minister of culture. He was awarded the Order of Lenin in mid-February, less than two weeks before his official rebuke.

Subsequently, he broadcast recommendations on the tillage practices to be employed in the Kremlin's latest land expansion program. As recently as 14 April, he addressed a group of "authorized agents" dispatched by the Central Committee to newly created state farms.

In their present preoccupation with improving agricultural performance, the Soviet leaders appear inclined to rely heavily on scientific guidance. But their emphasis is on those forms of applied science which offer immediate returns in stimulating larger crop yields. As a dirt-farming practitioner concerned with such practical problems as raising the yields of potatoes and wheat, he was more acceptable to the Stalinist hierarchy than academic figures who dealt with abstract formulas.

To a new regime which faces the same problems and demands that scientists get closer to the soil, Lysenko, both by background and position, is strategically placed to supply advice. It is even possible that Lysenko may be partially responsible for the optimism of Soviet policy-makers about the prospects for expanding agricultural production and the reclamation of more than 30,000,000 acres of marginal land in the next two years. This possibility is suggested by the parallelism in the views of Lysenko and Khrushchev as revealed in the latter's speech on the hazardous land expansion effort. In explaining the necessity for bold measures, Khrushchev, echoing an argument which Lysenko had advanced as early as 1950, pointed out that the uncritical application of the crop rotation system had resulted in a reduction of Soviet grain acreages since 1940.

Only one day after Khrushchev's recommendation on land reclamation had been formalized in a decree, Lysenko broadcast a statement on practices which should be observed in cultivating virgin and waste land. In his discussion, he minimized the importance of the soil and climatic limitations which had defeated similar experiments in the 1930's and asserted that proper methods of cultivation were of "paramount importance" in achieving high yields in the marginal areas. This argument was presumably required to quiet the fears of Soviet officials that previous disastrous experiences would be repeated.

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If Lysenko has indeed been a major influence in this latest program for stimulating agricultural production, the risks involved may be even greater than the Soviet leaders are themselves aware. Although he can measure some solid achievement in dealing with concrete agricultural problems, his claimed ability to improve agricultural production has frequently been far beyond his performance.

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